(c) whether the Government of Gujarat has requested to allot additional natural gas to Gujarat for power projects of Gujarat; and

(d) by when, the additional gas is to be allotted to Gujarat State for its power project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) A Management Committee, comprising one member each from Government and the consortium members constituting the contractor for Mid & South Tapti fields, exists under the provisions of the Production Sharing Contract (PSC) for monitoring performance of petroleum operations of the fields. This Committee, *inter-alia*, is to monitor and oversea the petroleum operations during the life of the PSC.

(c) and (d) A request had been received from the Government of Gujarat for allotment of additional Natural Gas to Pipavav Power Plant. As regards additional gas to be allotted to the State of Gujarat for power projects situated therein; for Pipavav Power Plant, Government has allocated 2.25 Million Metric Standard Cubic Meter per Day (MMSCMD) of Natural Gas out of additional production from Mid & South Tapti gas fields. Further, regassified Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from Petronet LNG available from April 2004 at market related prices through its Dahej terminal can be supplied to various units, including the power projects in Gujarat.

Oil Import Bill

†1484. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount being spent by Government on account of oil import and the extent of increase in the oil import bill during the each of the last three years;

(b) the impact of heavy expenditure being incurred on oil import on the economy of the country; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to check oil import expenditure?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) The gross import bill for the import of crude oil and petroleum product and the percentage increase in the gross import bill during the last three years was as follows:

Year	Rs. crore	% increase/decrease ()
2000-01	78,025	44
2001-02	67,646	(13)
2002-03	85,042	26

(b) The expenditure on oil imports results in outgo of foreign exchange thereby adversely effecting the trade deficit and thus increasing the current account deficit of balance of payments.

(c) Steps taken by the Government to reduce/check the oil import dependence include the following:

(1) Efforts made to increase the production of crude oil and gas by:

(i) increasing the exploration efforts through the New Exploration Licensing Policy.

(ii) improving the recovery factor from the existing major fields by implementing Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)/ Improved Oil Recovery (IOR) schemes.

(iii) exploring new areas, especially in deep water and difficult frontier areas, as also exploring in the deeper layers of the producing fields.

(iv) faster development of newly discovered fields and increased use of new technologies for seismic survey, work over, simulation operations, drilling of wells etc. in producing areas.

(v) acquiring acreages abroad.

(2) Mandating ethanol blending of petrol in certain States and Union Territories.

(3) Increasing awareness of oil conservation measures.